

*Policies and Benefits*

## TDCJ activates hot-weather precautions for summer

**H**ot weather is on the way and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice wants both staff and offenders to avoid heat stress during the coming months of high temperatures. Since exposure to heat and humidity for certain staff and offenders can be unavoidable, TDCJ urges everyone to be alert for signs of heat stress in themselves and others.

The agency continues to conduct annual hot-weather safety training to prepare staff for dealing with heat-stress issues, and every on-duty security staff member carries a reference card with information about the prevention, recognition and treatment of heat-related illness.

When possible during the day, avoid contact with hot sunlit surfaces, like asphalt or metal. If you are working outside, you're encouraged to use suntan lotion or sunblock, and wear lightweight clothing, including a wide-brimmed hat. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids, preferably water, and avoid caffeinated and sugary drinks. When necessary, take advantage of a designated respite area to cool off and rehydrate. Always get immediate medical help if you see anyone show symptoms of heat-related illness.



TDCJ staff and medical providers work together to protect offenders with medical conditions that make them susceptible to heat-related issues. As part of this effort, the agency established policies AD-10.64 Excessive and Extreme Temperature Conditions in the TDCJ, and CMHC Policy D-27.2 Heat Stress, both of which are designed to keep heat-related illness to a minimum.

The names of offenders who are determined to be heat-sensitive are entered onto a Medical Heat Restriction List, which is provid-

ed to officers who supervise housing areas. During their normal security checks, officers also conduct wellness checks on these offenders. If any offender requests medical help or shows signs of illness, qualified health services staff are summoned immediately to assist.

Heat-stress precautions will be implemented by unit wardens or department heads from April 1 until October 31, unless unseasonably warm temperatures require an extension. ▲